

WINNIFRED AUDITION

SCENE 1

37

Beat.

WINNIFRED

I just feel like
sometimes
I forget what the plan is
and then it feels like
we're just drifting farther and farther away from each other
even though we grew up together and
you married me and
then Sir Arthur invited you here and then
I *came* here for *you*, I became a servant in the castle to be close to *you*
but
now
I'm like, dusting a portrait
and like, serving drinks,
and you're like, sitting there next to him
at the head of the table
laughing at all his jokes
and pretending you don't know me at *all*,
pretending I'm just the girl who's serving you,
and not the girl who you said you wanted to spend your whole *life* with
and
then that starts to feel really really sad.

A beat.

FRANK

You know what the plan is.

WINNIFRED

Do I?

FRANK

Come on, of course you do.
When Sir Arthur makes me his heir, I'll be able to do whatever I want.
You'll be right there with me, we'll run the castle together – eventually.
But right now, I can't rock the boat.
And, you know, part of that is being, uh, friendly to his friends' daughters.

WINNIFRED

...But what if he doesn't make you his heir?

FRANK

(“*you're being naïve again*”)

Baby.

I mean he *has* a son.

WINNIFRED

Cuddy likes *morris* dancing.

FRANK

Okayyyy but someday he’s gonna meet a girl, and—

WINNIFRED

Uhh, yeah, no.

FRANK

How do you know?

WINNIFRED

Believe me.

FRANK

A beat, faux-casual:

About those daughters you mentioned...

WINNIFRED

Okay, Winn, look—

FRANK

Those *very* important daughters of a station higher // than—

WINNIFRED

C’mon, stop that Winn. It’s just part of the plan.

FRANK

Maybe that’s the part where the plan starts to suck.
(low and desperate)

We don’t need Sir Arthur, we could go back home—

FRANK

And do what?

(His vehemence has silenced her – he tries to find a gentler tone with her:)

Sweetheart, we have to ask for more than what we were born with.

WINNIFRED

Why?

FRANK

Because if we don't ask for more, we'll end up with less.

WINNIFRED

But right now, I don't even have you.

FRANK

You *have* me, we're just—
ugh, Winn
it's gonna be fine.

With great care:

WINNIFRED

Well
I hope so, Frank, because
here's the complicated thing:
I'm pregnant.

FRANK

...You're what??

WINNIFRED

Sorry – I should say:
We
are pregnant.

FRANK

Since when?

WINNIFRED

I wasn't sure for about a week.
And then I became sure.

FRANK

Oh.
Oh my god.

WINNIFRED

That doesn't sound like a good "oh my god."

FRANK

Oh my god.

WINNIFRED

Right.
 Okay.
 Well
 let me put it this way.
 If your Sir Arthur hooked you up with somebody's rich daughter,
 and you let him,
 and then everybody found out you actually have a *wife*
 and she's having your *kid*,
 I think you might not be as shiny as you are right now, you know?
 You might...tarnish. A little. In the eyes of Sir Arthur.
 So. Let's lock it down, Frank Thorney.

*Something shines in Frank - that cold edge.
 Frank leans in. His aria.*

FRANK
(soft, menacing)

Here's the thing, my love
 maybe I didn't explain this clearly
 so let me try it again:

Sometimes men come along
 born under a special star
 and that's me.
 I've always known it's going to be different for me.

I didn't scrape by for nothing,
 working the land - that shitty rocky soil,
 half the time you can't even get a potato out of it,
 and some winters we get by, but some winters there's just nothing,
 so we pull our belts tight and wait for spring and then spring comes
 but actually there's *still* nothing –

I don't plan to be nothing.

I got by because I could feel what I *could* be
 just under the ribs, waiting to grow,
 waiting for the right soil
 and here it is
 and here I am
 and I am ready to be great.

You too, if you want greatness,
 but maybe not you, maybe you don't
 and that's OK -
 people grow apart - and that's sad, when it happens,

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SCENE 2

85

13.

*Elizabeth's cottage, night. Scratch is there.
So is Winnifred. She has just arrived.
Elizabeth watches Winnifred with a
growing intensity.*

SCRATCH
(a little nonplussed)

What can you *get* for it?

WINNIFRED

Yes.

SCRATCH

You want to sell your soul and you want to know what you can *get* for it.

WINNIFRED

Yes, that's right. What'll you give me?

SCRATCH

... What do you want?

WINNIFRED

What kinds of things do you offer?

ELIZABETH
(to Winnifred)

You're doing this all wrong.

WINNIFRED

What did you get?

SCRATCH

Oh, she hasn't...// we haven't...

ELIZABETH
(same time, also a little flushed)

We haven't...

WINNIFRED
(to Elizabeth, shocked)

You *haven't*?

SCRATCH

We're just friends.

We're just talking.

ELIZABETH

WINNIFRED
(*"That's so weird"*)

...Oh.

A beat.

SCRATCH

How did you know how to find me, anyway?

WINNIFRED
(*gesturing to Elizabeth*)

Everyone says she has seven teats and a scar like a pentagram
and she dances with the devil in the pale moonlight -
and that's you, right? So...

ELIZABETH

Seriously?

SCRATCH

That didn't come from me.

WINNIFRED

So anyway, here I am.

Beat.

ELIZABETH

How's the castle?

WINNIFRED

Drafty.

ELIZABETH

How's Sir Arthur?

WINNIFRED

Exhausting.

ELIZABETH

How's the baby?

What baby?

SCRATCH

(The women look at him. He catches up.)

Oh.

Whoa.

Congrats.

WINNIFRED

(to Elizabeth)

You can see it on me?

ELIZABETH

Right when you walked in.

WINNIFRED

Nobody else has noticed yet.

ELIZABETH

I'm particularly observant.

Is it Sir Arthur's?

WINNIFRED

No, Frank. But he's dead now, so—

SCRATCH

Whoa no way.

WINNIFRED

...You really haven't been keeping up to date.

Scratch kinda shrugs like, wow guess not.

ELIZABETH

And here you are, unwed, disgraced.

WINNIFRED

Oh no. No you don't.

ELIZABETH

Excuse me?

WINNIFRED

You're looking at me, and you're maybe enjoying a little pity, you're like: "Welcome to the land of the outcasts." But guess what – I'm not gonna end up like you. And that's what this guy is for.

(turning back to Scratch; this is her aria,

simple, powerful, urgent:)

I don't want a lot.
 I *did*, I *did* want a lot. I wanted Frank -
 the way he used to look at me, the way he used to laugh,
 the surprises that were little windows into a whole new life together
 one our parents weren't capable of,
 but we *would* be, we'd figure out how, we'd invent it.

But you know what?
 Then I grew up.

So now what I want is this:
 I want to stay in the castle
 and keep dusting the mantles and cleaning the kitchen,
 and I want my kid to be a girl, so people can ignore her
 and she can stay safe and quiet and out of the way
 and maybe sometime, years from now,
 there can be a stable boy or a servant
 and they don't have to love each other but they'll get married
 and then I'll grow old
 and then one day I'll die
 and they'll have me buried in the castle churchyard
 it doesn't have to be a prime real estate, but I'd like it if it was near Frank
 (or within earshot, anyway)
 (or close enough that if wildflowers grow, in the spring, maybe the same bees that go to
 his flowers would come to my flowers) -

And if a soul is what that costs, I don't think that's so much, really,
 because what's a soul ever done for me?

A beat.

SCRATCH

Well I think we can make that work.

ELIZABETH

That's your pitch?

WINNIFRED

...What.

ELIZABETH

All you want is more of the same?
 If you're gonna sell your soul, sell it for something better.

WINNIFRED

(gestures to their surroundings)

What, like this?

ELIZABETH

So pick something different, pick a new // thing—

WINNIFRED

There are no new things! There's a certain set of things, and whether you're at the castle or in a hut – they'd still be the same things. And what's more, you know that.

ELIZABETH

That's not true.

WINNIFRED

No?

Let's say I ask the devil to make me – nobility! The top of the heap. The men go out hunting, the men go to war - and there I am, sitting alone at the end of a very long table. And the room is very silent, and there's still nobody listening. Where's our new world, Elizabeth?

A moment. Elizabeth hears this.

ELIZABETH

So we have to imagine one, we have to imagine things differently.

WINNIFRED

I can't.

Everything I think of, it looks like what I know.

I can't see what a new world would look like.

(really asking)

Can you?

*A beat. Elizabeth tries. She really tries.
And... she can't. Her silence says it all.*

WINNIFRED

If we're smart, we'll take what there is, what we know. We'll carve out a corner, make some concessions, and get by.

That's what I plan to do.

And if you have any sense, you'll do the same thing before the devil moves on.

(back to Scratch)

So do I sign somewhere? Do we need a lawyer?

How did Cuddy do it?

Scratch has a realization.